



May 13, 2010

Reply to Attn of: 140

TO: Distribution

FROM: 140/Chief Counsel

SUBJECT: Widely Attended Gathering Determination Regarding Attendance at
TIROS 50th Anniversary Reception and Program

On May 20, 2010, the American Institute for Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) is sponsoring a reception and program to recognize the 50th anniversary of the launch of the TIROS spacecraft. TIROS is the first world-wide weather information system, and was the precursor to future weather and Earth observing satellites such as the GOES and POES series, TERRA, AQUA, AURA and ICESAT-I. The event will be held at the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center.

Approximately 200 people are expected to attend the event, representing NASA, other Federal agencies, industry, and academia. The estimated cost per person is \$110. The program will include a presentation from National Geographic photographer James Balog and Dr. Waleed Abdalati, Director of the Earth Science and Observation Center. Invited guest speakers include Senator Barbara Mikulski and NASA Administrator Charles Bolden.

Attendance at the event will allow NASA employees an opportunity to discuss TIROS's contributions to science and our understanding of the Earth's climate with the other attendees. I therefore conclude that NASA's interest in its employees attending this event outweighs any concern that attendance may, or may appear to, improperly influence NASA employees in the performance of their official duties.

Based on the above, I find that the event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 CFR 2635.204(g). Accordingly, NASA employees whose duties do not substantially affect AIAA or a majority of its members may accept free attendance to the event for themselves and their guests.

NASA employees whose duties substantially affect AIAA or a majority of its members, for instance by way of procurement duties, should seek an individual determination regarding participation in this event from their local ethics counselor.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. Stephens".

Robert M. Stephens